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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

Wil Okabe
President

Joan Kamila Lewis
Vice President

Colleen Pasco
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2015

RE: S.B. 368 – RELATING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

PERSON TESTIFYING: WIL OKABE
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

The Honorable Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran, The Honorable Vice-Chair Maile Shimabukuro and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) **strongly supports S.B. 368**, relating to collective bargaining.

HSTA is the exclusive representative of more than 13,500 public and charter school teachers statewide.

To date, HSTA is negotiating with state to negotiate with the state for an increased compensation package as well as exercising its rights in its clause in the teachers 2013-2017 labor contract. The salary study clearly finds that based on other national studies, Hawaii's public school teachers are among the lowest paid teachers in the country. It is a conundrum as it remains that the disparity worsens with Hawaii's cost of living factored in.

HSTA strongly affirms its collective bargaining process. Further, HSTA believes that salary schedules should provide entry-level salaries and career earning comparable to those of other professions and occupations with similar preparation and responsibilities and be structured to provide compensation levels that encourage classroom teachers to remain in the classroom and in the educational setting. Salaries should be based on preparation, academic degrees, experience, professional growth, responsibilities and full length of service. Salaries should also provide additional compensation for certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards as well as other national certifications that meet rigorous and appropriate qualifying standards.

As HSTA, we believe it is imperative that the state make a commitment to value professionals who provide quality education to our students. Teachers deserve proper

support and compensation so we may continue to attract and retain quality education workforce for the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of S.B. 368.**